

Amendments to the Claims:

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Previously Amended) A method for monitoring the status of manufacturing products continuously according to one of a plurality of manufacturing processes, comprising:

31 determining if at least a predetermined manufacturing process, for exploiting a property, licensed by a license agreement, out of a plurality of manufacturing processes has been executed,

storing the number of operations executed for manufacturing the products according to the predetermined manufacturing process, when it is determined that the predetermined manufacturing process has been executed; and

outputting the stored number of operations executed for manufacturing the products according to the predetermined manufacturing process.

2. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the determining step comprises:

executing a program for determining if the predetermined manufacturing process has been executed, together with the plurality of manufacturing processes, or independently therefrom.

3. (Previously Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

detecting operation of a device operated according to the predetermined manufacturing process; and

outputting a predetermined signal, on the basis of which it is determined if the predetermined manufacturing process has been executed.

4. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 3, wherein the determining step comprises:

executing a program for determining if the predetermined manufacturing process has been executed, together with the plurality of manufacturing process, or independently therefrom,

and wherein the storing step comprises:

storing the number of operations executed for manufacturing the products according to the predetermined manufacturing process, when ~~it is the program for~~ determining has determined that the predetermined manufacturing process has been executed- ~~according to the determining program~~, and determined that the predetermined manufacturing process has been executed on the basis of the output signal.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

transmitting the stored number of operations to a communication infrastructure.

6. (Previously Amended) An apparatus for monitoring the status of manufacturing products continuously according to one of a plurality of processes, comprising:

determination means for determining if at least a predetermined manufacturing process for exploiting a property licensed by a license agreement out of a plurality of manufacturing processes has been executed;

storage means for storing the number of operations executed for manufacturing the products according to the predetermined manufacturing process, when the determination means determines that the predetermined manufacturing process has been executed; and

output means for outputting the number of operations executed for manufacturing the products according to the predetermined manufacturing process stored in the storage means.

7. (Previously Amended) The apparatus of claim 6, wherein the determination means comprises a program for determining if the predetermined manufacturing process has been executed, together with the plurality of manufacturing processes, or independently therefrom.

β¹ 8. (Previously Amended) The apparatus of claim 6, further comprising:
detection means for detecting operation of a device operated according to the predetermined manufacturing process, and outputting a predetermined signal,
and wherein the determination means determines if the predetermined manufacturing process has been executed, on the basis of the signal output from the detection means.

9. (Previously Amended) The apparatus of claim 8, wherein the determination means comprises a program for determining if the predetermined manufacturing process has been executed, together with the plurality of manufacturing processes, or independently therefrom, and wherein the storage means stores the number of operations executed for manufacturing the products according to the predetermined manufacturing process, when the determination means determines that the predetermined manufacturing process has been executed according to the determining program, and determines that the predetermined manufacturing process has been executed on the basis of the signal output from the detection means.

10. (Original) The apparatus of claim 6, further comprising:

communication means for transmitting the output of the output means to a communication infrastructure, to which the number of operations stored in the storage means is transmitted.

11. (Previously Amended) The apparatus of claim 6, wherein a license agreement is provided for a property covering the products or a process for manufacturing the products, under the license agreement, a licensee of the agreement holding the apparatus for monitoring the status of manufacturing the products, and wherein the monitoring apparatus determines if the products or the process made or used by the licensee is covered by the licensed property, on the basis of operation of the predetermined manufacturing process for manufacturing the products.

12. (Original) The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the property to be licensed under the license agreement is at least one of a utility patent, design patent, know how, copyright and technical assistance.

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